

5 a Day-Power Play!

News



Dietary Supplements – Safe For Kids?

5 a Day-Power
Play! Campaign

Dietary supplements used to mean vitamins and minerals. Today it can mean herbs, botanical products, enzymes, animal extracts, and more. Certain vitamins and minerals that are considered safe at low doses can be toxic at high doses. Dietary supplements don't have to be monitored by the government to be safe or effective. They don't even have to list all the products they use on the label; foods must list all the ingredients used. "All natural" doesn't always mean safe. Some of these products can have effects that are as powerful as drugs, or interfere with a medicine your doctor gives you.

Most of the dietary supplements sold are made for adults. It shouldn't be assumed that supplements work the same in kids as they do in adults. A

product safe for adults may not be safe for a child.

Reading the labels isn't enough. Just because an ingredient is on the label, doesn't mean that the amount is safe or accurate. There is no guarantee that the product will even do what the label claims. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) found these ingredients to be potentially dangerous: chaparral, comfrey, ephedra (mahuang), germander, germanium, lobelia, L-tryptophan, magnolia-stephania preparations, willow bark, dieter's teas, and excess amounts of vitamins and minerals. These are not only dangerous to children, but also to adults. Check with your child's pediatrician for more information on supplements. **Be a role model for your kids & eat healthy & be active every day!**

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Did you know that...?

- Dietary supplements don't have to be checked for safety
- Some dietary supplements don't even use the part of the plant that can help people
- Some dietary supplements can interfere with the medicine your doctor gives you
- Some dietary supplements have been tested and don't even do what they claim

Knowing What to Choose

There are so many dietary supplements in stores today, it seems as if they are everywhere. These products can be dangerous if you don't know much about them. Have you ever wondered, "Are these products safe for kids?" Varro Tyler, a professor at Purdue University, a leading authority on herbal medicines, does not recommend dietary supplements for children under twelve years of age. Dietary supplements, beyond a multivitamin for healthy children who eat a variety of foods, are not necessary or safe.

Kids and adults need many different

nutrients to stay healthy and grow. These nutrients can be found in foods, so it is important to eat a well-balanced diet with 5 to 9 servings of brightly colored fruits and vegetables each day. These nutrients are best when they come from foods, not supplements. You can also ask your doctor about multivitamins designed for kids; one that has the recommended amounts (according to the RDA) is generally considered safe. Some might not even need them every day.

(Source: FTC Consumer Feature May, 2000, www.nutriwatch.org/08Ads/kidsupps.html)

For more information about
the **5 a Day-Power Play!**
Campaign,

please contact:

Melodee Lopez, R.D.
at (909) 387-6320

Or visit our website at
www.sbcounty.gov/eatwell